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GEMS OF COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE

UNDER the title of "Examples of Domestic Colonial Architecture in New England," there has been compiled and issued by J. M. Corner and E. F. Soderholtz, of the Boston Architectural Club, a portfolio of plates from photographs of still existing structures in the eastern States which date from the most distinctive period of the American builder's art—that period when a certain classic grace and simplicity of style still had honor at the hands of people who could afford to build fine houses, and who did not base their taste upon sensational novelty and eccentricity of garish show. New England is still comparatively rich in these reminders, though the bulk of them are fast going to decay; indeed, not a few of those comprised in these fifty plates are now put to the base uses of the humblest occupation, and cannot much longer remain even in their present degraded condition. Some are quite abandoned, and dropping into ruin; others are the abodes of the most squalid poverty; and in but few cases do these mansions of the past retain a vestige of their early dignity and hospitable tenancy. All that is left of them is the shell, from which life has departed, but even such a shell is too precious to be entirely lost, and the compilers of this work have done well, indeed, to save for us as much as they have.

They have done wisely, also, in restricting their selections of subjects to the distinctively domestic buildings of the time. The churches and other public edifices which remain to us from the period antedating the present century have been pretty completely exploited already. It is in these neglected and vanishing landmarks of our social life that the double interest centres, of historical association and of esthetical and artistic charm. The scope of the work may be comprehended from the statement that its subjects range from the splendid old Pepperill House, at Kittery, Me., to Providence and Newport, in Rhode Island. Many of the plates are of interior details, hallways, staircases, chimney-pieces, and of those delightful doorways which one still finds, here and there, even in New York itself. The selection of the point of view for the pictures evidences an artistic taste, as well as an eye to the actual utility of the work from an architectural standpoint, and while it will, naturally, make its most direct appeal to the technical man, it also constitutes a volume which cannot but prove a source of pleasure and of perpetual interest to all persons of culture and of taste. It is, in every sense, a work for the collector interested in the historical annals of the United States.

The compilers, encouraged by the success of this, their first venture, have now in press a similar selection, of the same period, of the architecture of the South. The style of building in the two sections was marked by distinct manners of treatment, not only in the construction of buildings, necessitated by difference of climate, but by variations of ornamentation, dictated by differences of temperament and taste. Thus, the second work will prove a worthy supplement to, and completion of, the first, and give permanent record to a great deal of value in our national art which is fast succumbing to the ravages of time. Both works may be examined, and subscriptions to them made, through Mr. J. W. Bouton, of this city.

M. Clemenceau has sent to the Museum of the Louvre a rather interesting relic which has been for a long time in his possession. It is a pencil sketch of the Princess de Lamballe, the bosom friend and companion of Marie Antoinette. The drawing was made by an almost unknown artist named Gabriel, who limned the lineaments of the ill-fated princess as she was being led through the streets to La Force, there to become one of the victims of the massacres perpetrated by the Terrorists in September, 1792.

Bibliomaniacs are usually men, says a writer in the *Times*, of this city. Women have a rage for collecting old china, old lace fans, miniatures and the rest, but not often rare and curious books. There is, however, one woman in New York who journeyed to Boston not long ago after a "first edition" that was to be sold there. She did not get it. It was a little book of not more than thirty pages, a first edition of Edgar A. Poe's writings, of which only two are known to be in existence. The volume sold for \$1,850, which was a little above her figure. "I wanted it badly," she confessed, "but I had to limit my bidding, and it was below this sum." This same woman has a fortune tied up in rare old books. "Why not?" she says. "They constantly increase in value, and if you know what to buy they are as safe as peachblow vases. You can insure them against fire, and it would take a very cultured thief to know what volumes to carry away. I find a wonderful fascination in the pursuit of a treasure—this Poe edition, for instance. The printer who got it out has been traced, his descendants visited, and his record searched. It is positive that only two copies of the original edition are left. No, old books are not forged," she finished in answer to a question. "It has been tried, but the deception is sure to be discovered. The old paper and old type cannot be made now."

ABE LINCOLN'S HAT

CHICAGO, with her usual enterprise, has snapped another plum of curiosity away from New York. This is nothing less than the famous old stovepipe hat which Abraham Lincoln wore on his way to Washington to be inaugurated for his first term. As may be remembered, the great War President stopped in this city on his road to the National Capital, and while here put up at the Astor House. Style was about the last thing Lincoln ever troubled himself with, but while his general get-up was the reverse of fashionable, his headgear was simply too absurdly uncouth for common sense. The very street boys made a mockery of it, and the newspapers devoted facetious columns to that "shocking bad hat." Lincoln enjoyed the humor of the situation quite as much as anyone else, and kept on wearing the hat. But when he came to leave the city, the hatter Knox, who had a perfect genius for advertising himself which has become historic, gravely approached the carriage which was to convey him to the cars, and proposed to trade a brand-new and unimpeachably stylish tile, which he had had made, for the one the President-elect sheltered his intellect with. The offer was accepted and the exchange made on the spot.

There was at that time in New York a man named William Gibson, who was well known as an artist, especially in the decorative field. He was a gifted designer, a skilful worker in stained glass, and personally one of the most amiable and popular men in town. Gibson was also in his way a collector, and his studio was a veritable museum of curios and relics of all sorts which he had picked up himself and which had been given to him by his friends. To him Knox presented the Lincoln hat. It was frequently exhibited, not only in the owner's studio, but at church fairs and kindred charitable events, and its existence was well known to local collectors and many of the public at large. When Gibson died his estate was divided among his sons, and the Lincoln hat fell to one of them, who kept it in the factory where some of the founder's enterprises are still carried on. Here it was seen by a collector who is a reverent worshipper of the immortal Republican, and who appreciated the relic at its true value. Apprehensive of the danger of its loss by fire, carelessness, or some other accident, in this insecure place, this gentleman induced the owner to part with it, and through his instrumentality it was brought to the attention of Mr. C. F. Gunther of Chicago, who, ever alert for additions to his museum, promptly possessed himself of it.

The hat is a structure of what is commonly known as the stovepipe style of caputistic architecture, and indeed bears no remote resemblance to a section of the smoke-conductor of a large-sized kitchen stove. It is lined inside with paper, in imitation of satin, and on the paper lining is written in pencil: "A. Lincoln, Springfield, Ill." The label shows it to have been manufactured by George Hall of Springfield, and to judge by appearances the wearer did not exchange it for another any too soon. It is an important addition to Mr. Gunther's collection, already rich in valuable national relics and in souvenirs of great and illustrious Americans. Credit for securing it for the Gunther collection is due to Mr. Fritz R. Kaldenberg of this city.

All the art objects belonging to the jurist, the late Benjamin H. Brewster, have been presented to the Philadelphia Library Company under the will of his sister. There are vases, busts and figurines in terra cotta, paintings in oil, and drawings in water color and pen and ink. His library of 3,000 volumes, chiefly on Roman history and archaeology, is also presented to the library.

It is reported from London that a project is on foot to secure for the big Chicago show the Nuremberg collection of instruments of torture. It is the only collection of its kind in the world that is to any degree exhaustive. For many years it lay in the royal castle at Nuremberg, where it was one of the leading features of the famous old town, no tourist considering his Bavarian sojourn complete without a look at it. The collection is now owned in England. The Right Honorable the Earl of Shrewsbury and Talbot had a collection of such instruments, together with many ancient prints and engravings of other instruments and the method of their use. To this he has added the Nuremberg lot, which includes the most famous, if not the most ingenious, contrivances for cruelty that were ever constructed.

The Royal Academy has bought with the income from the Chantrey bequest the large painting by Mr. Frank D. Millet, Vice-President of the National Academy of Design, called "Between Two Fires." This is the fourth painting by an American bought by the Chantrey Fund.

Only \$13,000 has been subscribed this year in Boston for the Museum of Fine Arts, and \$20,000 is needed to run the establishment. Subscriptions should be sent to Edward H. Greenleaf, Curator; annual subscriptions cost \$10.